

From: Steven K. Watkins
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/23/02 11:39am
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

To whom it may concern,

As a 30 year old Electrical Engineer, I have been a part of the "computer revolution" all of my life. I would like to comment on the current state of the Microsoft trial and my experiences during my career.

Microsoft has been a spectacular business and an amazing example of the American dream, but has stifled innovation and creativity in the computer industry for as long as I remember. Every day I think that Microsoft has pushed the industry to its limits, and every day I am surprised and disappointed at what Microsoft gets away with.

I have seen Microsoft develop from a computer OS monopoly, into a power that is greater than most governments (maybe our own). I do not know of everything that Microsoft has influenced, but I do know that they are spreading their sphere of influence dramatically to include TV stations, news media, Radio stations, control of computer applications (every successful game/application seems to shortly get a Microsoft clone or be incorporated into Windows), control of the Internet, console game systems, set top boxes, computer peripherals, PDA, schools, ... (and the list continues).

I was elated when Microsoft was deemed a monopoly. I have worked for companies and been told horror stories about how Microsoft has used their product to make other companies "bend to their will." This influence has sometimes been indirect (but intentional) and sometimes shockingly direct. I also know about the frustration of being passionate about the computer industry and revolution but having no choice as a consumer except to choose an inferior product because of a powerhouse of a monopoly.

I was very disappointed with the proposed final judgement against Microsoft. I can see no hope that the innovation and creativity will be allowed to flourish if the proposed judgement is accepted.

Please reconsider the final judgement to strengthen some of the known issues so that Microsoft can become a beneficial competitor in a healthy market instead of the sole occupant in that market. I consider such matters when I vote (and I vote regularly). I will consider a light sentence for Microsoft a sign of a weakening government and a need to strengthen the oversight of corporations for the good of the American public.

Concerned,

Steven K. Watkins

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Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic. -Arthur C. Clarke

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